
Title: The Casting (pt 1)

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Within the Meer crypt a small shimmer of light appeared over the carved wooden tiles of the teleporter entrance. Dasha blinked once as the light twinkled out of sight and, with a catlike grace, walked slowly through the great dark chamber towards Adranath. A slight smile played across her face as she approached him.

“Ah, you have returned to us, child. I take it your meeting with the humans was interesting?” Adranath said without looking up, his hands busy casting a healing spell over a warrior.

“Interesting... yes.” She waited for the ancient mage to finish his spell. The warrior’s broken leg snapped back into place and the glow around Adranath’s hands faded. He looked up at her and smiled.

“You seem amused. I do still remember how to cast a healing spell after all this time.” He smiled warmly at her. The Meer warrior walked away to join others in meditation.

“Oh, I was still thinking about my meeting with the humans, Master.” She took a seat near the Eternal. “I sat and spoke with humans, in a

human castle. It was not altogether an unpleasant experience, but certainly nothing I thought I would ever do!”

“Yes, it is fascinating, isn’t it? In my time as the Watcher I saw nothing but the more savage humans here in Ilshenar, until recently. When these more civilized humans came into the world my first suspicion was that they had been enchanted with sorcery.” He chuckled. “So you saw this city of... Britain, was it?”

“Yes, quite impressive. They seem very... established. One of them—quite a warrior—named Dupre, has asked us to form an alliance against the Juka.” She smirked. “I expect they have become too proud to directly beg for help.” And would it be so wrong for us to assist, Dasha?” Adranath asked quietly. “If it were not for my haste those ages ago, attempting to wipe the Juka away in one chaotic moment, Exodus may not have been able to bring them here. They wouldn’t be threatening the humans now.”

“You have to stop blaming yourself, Adranath. What once was our fate is now nothing but a vision, a nightmare we were spared from. You have sacrificed enough during your time as the Watcher. I warned them of the Juka forces moving toward Minoc...”

“The humans need our

help. We did not risk placing our entire race into the great sleep to sit by and watch the Juka exterminate the innocent. Our fight is with the Juka; why do they not fight us? We are clearly weakened as a whole by our slumber and our ignorance of the inhabitants of this time. Why would the Juka not attack us when this weakness is clear?" He stood and paced. "We are not a threat to Exodus, Dasha, not now. The humans are. He would not waste time attempting to destroy them if it were not so."

"What do you suggest we do?" Dasha looked confused.

"I suggest we spare the humans as much trouble with the Juka as we can. Say what you will, but if not for my actions the Juka would not threaten them. I must assist." Adranath paused. A determined look fell over his face like a mask of stone. "I mean to cast the Decay upon the Juka."

"You're willing to cast so dangerous a spell to help the humans?" Dasha stood and placed a hand on the Watcher's shoulder. "The Juka are spread out over many cities; it would be unwise to attempt to channel so much magic to strike them all. You could damage the very balance of nature!"